



111 Larch Street | Sudbury, ON P3E 4T5 Canada | 705 674 0721 | www.st-andrews.ca/church

To the St. Andrew's congregation,

The Emergency Planning Committee (EPC), with representation from both the Church and the Place, met virtually on Thursday afternoon to review the current public health conditions, and to determine an appropriate response in light of:

- the steadily increasing number of COVID-19 cases in our area, and
- the Medical Officer of Health's recent work-from-home instructions and strong recommendations to area schools, businesses, and organizations.

The EPC unanimously recommended that in-person worship be suspended for this coming Sunday December 5th.

Church Council held a virtual meeting immediately following the EPC meeting, and unanimously endorsed this recommendation.

Sunday worship services will continue to be live-streamed on our YouTube channel at the usual time.

The only people present in the sanctuary will be those directly involved, at this moment when our Health Unit is advising more vigilance in our COVID precautions.

Please note also:

- In addition to this email message, a notice will be posted on our website homepage and on our Facebook page, and on the front doors of the Place.

- We will also phone those members who have been attending our services but do not use email.

*(See also the attached **Church Closure Policy** for more details.)*

The EPC and Council do not make this difficult decision lightly. We had hoped not to have to take this step, recognizing that gathering for worship means so much to so many for a number of different reasons. We believe, however, that a serious preventative response is required on the part of everyone in our community.

As Dr. Sutcliffe writes, *"With the widespread circulation of the virus in our community, our response also needs to be widespread, reducing mobility and face-to-face interactions overall. This is the purpose of the work-from-home instructions. **Further, every sector needs to do their part, voluntarily at this time, to pave the path to lower case rates and re-opening,**"*

Dr. Sutcliffe's letter also strongly recommends avoiding in-person gatherings, both social and professional, and implementing virtual meetings and gatherings. These additional protective measures will "help reduce the spread of the virus, protect the community, and preserve the capacity of our health system."

In the spirit of our "Love your Neighbour" message, we are called to keep the well-being of the congregation and the larger community at the centre of our concerns. We encourage everyone to do their part in reducing the spread of this debilitating virus, by limiting their non-essential interactions over the course of the coming days and weeks.

(continued over)



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The EPC and Church Council will meet jointly next Thursday December 9 to make a decision about the December 12th service, taking into account the case count statistics and other public health-related information shared in the daily reports released by the PHSD between now and that date.

ADVENT GIFTING

Please refer to the notice in the NEW that was emailed earlier this week regarding the Advent Gifting initiative in support of Queen Elizabeth and Lansdowne Public Schools, and Better Beginnings Better Futures.

If you would like to contribute, please email Sylvia Carscadden at sylvia.carscadden@gmail.com or call Sylvia at 249-360-3474 and she will arrange for someone to pick up your donations.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please contact either of us by email or by phone.

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Co-Chairs of Church Council

St. Andrew's United Church
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